

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

Purpose of Acquisition

The North Table Mountain Ecological Reserve (NTMER or Reserve) was acquired primarily to preserve and protect the rare Northern Basalt Flow Vernal Pools habitat type that supports sensitive plants and animals that are either locally endemic or unique to California. Northern Basalt Flow Vernal Pools habitat is found in only four localities in California. Sensitive plant and animal species that occur on the NTMER include Butte County meadowfoam (*Limnanthes floccosa* ssp. *californica*), Butte County golden clover (*Trifolium jokerstii*), Red Bluff dwarf rush (*Juncus leiospermus* var. *leiospermus*), and California horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum frontale*).

Acquisition History

Acquisition of the NTMER was first proposed to and approved by the Wildlife Conservation Board in 1990, but the purchase was postponed until the landowner was able to transfer the title free of liens. On August 23, 1993, the acquisition was again proposed and approved by the WCB and on October 13, 1993, NTMER was acquired by the State of California. Funds for this acquisition were provided by Proposition 70, a 1988 voter approved initiative that designated funds specifically for the acquisition of Significant Natural Areas as identified by the Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Approximately 3,273 acres were purchased at that time, and an additional 42 acres were acquired on December 24, 1997, for a total of 3,315 acres. The additional land was purchased to enable direct public access to the NTMER from the gravel parking lot on Cherokee Road.

Purpose of This Management Plan

The primary goal of this Management Plan is to protect and preserve the Northern Basalt Flow Vernal Pools habitat type and sensitive species on the NTMER. Other goals include:

- Providing direction for the NTMER management goals that are consistent with the acquisition purpose, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), and other pertinent laws.

- Guiding habitat, species, and programs management to achieve the CDFG's mission to protect and enhance plant and animal species for their ecological value and enjoyment by the public.
- Providing an overview of the NTMER operation, maintenance, and personnel needs to implement management goals and to serve as a planning aid for annual budget preparation.
- Providing a description of potential and actual environmental impacts that may occur during management activities, identify mitigation actions to negate or reduce any potential impacts, and provide necessary environmental documentation for compliance with state and federal statutes and regulations.